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# MINNESOTA LIBRARIES



## SERVICE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### Changing Patterns in Library Service to Children

and Young People: A Bird's Eye View.....	<i>Della McGregor</i>	99
Duluth.....	<i>Ingjerd O. Omdahl</i>	99
Hennepin County.....	<i>Helen A. Young</i>	101
Hibbing.....	<i>Mrs. Lois B. Smiland</i>	102
Mankato.....	<i>Maud Hart Lovelace</i>	104
Minneapolis.....	<i>Mrs. Phyllis F. Bryan</i>	106
Moorhead.....	<i>Myrtle T. Rundquist</i>	108
New Ulm.....	<i>Alma Scott</i>	110
Red Wing.....	<i>Jean Gardiner Smith</i>	113
Rochester.....	<i>Lucille Gottry</i>	116
St. Paul.....	<i>Della McGregor</i>	118
Stillwater.....	<i>Gertrude Glennon</i>	120
Winona.....	<i>Dorothy Jefferson</i>	121
School Library Workshop.....	<i>Naomi Hokanson</i>	123
Minnesota Library Association Conference.....	<i>David R. Watkins</i>	124
Salmagundi.....		126
School Library Bill of Rights.....		128

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# Changing Patterns in Library Service to Children and Young People in Minnesota

## A Bird's Eye View

DELLA McGREGOR

*Chief of Youth Services, St. Paul Public Library*

The wider distribution of books to children and the development of library facilities for the rendering of better service have long been a matter of concern to Minnesota citizens and Minnesota librarians. Cognizant as Minnesotans have been about the problem of providing library service, it has been slower than many states in the recognition of individuals and communities that have helped to blaze trails and develop civic and personal responsibility for the betterment of library service and professional training.

Last spring when the matter came up for discussion, it was suggested that members of the Children's and Young People's Section lay the ground work for the development of some tangible record of the history and pattern of library service to children and young people in the state.

The following accounts are the result of informal conversations and queries sent out to a cross section of around twenty Minnesota librarians. That a beginning was made at this time was largely due to a sincere desire on the part of members of the Section to pay tribute to Minnesota libraries and librarians whose inspiration, leadership, integrity, and zeal have set such a high standard for the profession. We are hopeful also that these first accounts will be a matter of real gratification to Miss McLaughlin, Miss Hayner, and Miss Greer. Many of the contributors are their former students, library patrons, professional associates, or newcomers to the profession who are putting into practice the concepts of progressive library service for which they laid the foundation with both wisdom and vision. Before the fall meeting of the Minnesota Library Association in Minneapolis in 1956, we trust we may count on similar articles from every library in the state offering service to children and young people, however modest or extensive the program may be.

The completed record may well be of interest and useful to instructors of courses

in children's literature and library service to children and young people in teachers' colleges and library schools, as well as to authors, publishers, library boards and architects.

In the event a book seems impractical in the immediate future, the records will be turned over to the Minnesota Historical Society for preservation. With such records available it will be possible by 1957 for the Section to promote plans for the development of the program of workshops and other activities for which a fund is now being raised honoring the services of Isabel McLaughlin, former Co-ordinator of Library Work with Children in Minneapolis Public Library; Irene Hayner, former Instructor at University of Minnesota Library School; and Margaret Greer, former Supervisor of School Libraries in Minneapolis.

The appearance of the present articles has been made possible through the whole-hearted cooperation of librarians in the field. It was Russell Schunk who made the initial suggestion, both for the development of such a project and for allocation of space for publication in the September number of *Minnesota Libraries*. When it seemed advisable to extend the date in order to acquire more diversified reports, Mr. Schunk granted the request for more time and also increased the space allotment in the December issue. Mr. Schunk's interest in the project and editorial assistance have been helpful, constructive, and greatly appreciated.

## Duluth

INGJERD O. OMDAHL  
*Children's Librarian*  
*Duluth Public Library*

According to the old records, library service of sorts to the children of Duluth was in existence some time before 1900. But it was not until 1901, when the library moved into

its Carnegie building, that the children got a room of their own. And it took another twenty-five years before anything was added to that one room.

Library reports from the early twenties tell of a dream that Miss Moore, then Head Librarian, and Miss Peters, in charge of children's service, had in regard to the intermediate group of children. They realized the need of separating the services, and the first step in this direction was the setting aside of one section of shelves for the use of the older group. When the library was expanded in 1927 an addition was planned for the Children's Department. And in November of 1927 the Howard Pyle Room was opened. Alice Brown was at this time the Children's Librarian, and it was up to her to develop the services of the intermediate room.

No major changes in the physical aspects of the Children's Department have taken place since then. It still consists of the same two rooms. As the need for better service increased with the growth of the city, branches were, of course, added until we now have five of them. There is no children's librarian in any of the branches, and book selection is taken care of in the main library. Such activities as summer reading, Book Week, and visits from schools are carried out at the branches. Other special services to children are limited to the main Children's Department.

It is usually said that services cannot be measured by circulation figures, but, for the most part, they are the only form of statistics we can use for comparisons. Even if they do not give a really accurate picture, they still give us a pretty good idea. Therefore, I shall use a few of these figures in trying to show how the services stand today.

In 1937 the Children's Department circulated 78,460 books, of which 13,200 were from the Howard Pyle Room. Eight hundred and fifty dollars was spent for juvenile books. In 1929 the circulation was 129,000, while 1947 just about marks an all-time low for the department. In 1948 we started another climb upward, and at this point it is still continuing.

When TV came, in 1952, a loss in circulation was expected during the following year or two. However, the increase continued, and during the last year and a half,

markedly so. For the first six months of 1955 our records show a circulation of 50,000 juvenile books, including 12,100 from the Howard Pyle Room. Approximately five hundred dollars' worth of new books were bought in that same period. The large increase in intermediate circulation is due partly to the fact that we have intensified our efforts there.

In spite of statements made in so many cases to the effect that children no longer read — or no longer read as much as they used to — we, as librarians, know that they do. Their need for books is as great as, or even greater than, ever. In fact, judging from the physical condition of a lot of our books, I would say their need is quite desperate.

When I was in library school and still very idealistic, I used to think that my main basis for discarding books would be something like this, "Would I want my own children, if I had any, to take this book home?" If the answer was "No," the book would be ready for discard. Due to a necessary revision of ideas — consider a budget of nine hundred dollars in 1937, and of \$1,025 in 1955 — the train of thought at this point runs more like, "Would the children rather have this book in its present condition than not have it at all?" Where that leaves us concerning the idea of teaching the youngsters to handle the books with respect I am not so sure.

For the last couple of years, our activities during the summer months have been limited to the summer reading program. This past summer the theme was "Westward Ho." In spite of the Davy Crockett craze, this did not seem to interest the youngsters as much as previous themes. Approximately 240 children read five books or more, with an average of twenty to twenty-five.

When school opens in the fall, we again take up our work with the teachers. For some time we have had an arrangement permitting any teacher to take out a collection of books for classroom use. The number of books in the collections varies, but the average is about thirty-five. The collections may go out for six weeks, with a right to renew for another six unless the books are needed. The demand for collections increased quite a bit in 1954-55, and we have no special fund or stock of books set aside for this use.

Any collection we send to the schools we take off our regular shelves. We are starting out the year 1955-56 with this same arrangement: whether or not it can be kept up at this rate depends upon several things — mainly, however, upon demand and upon our budget.

Like most other libraries, we have school classes visiting the Children's Department. Whenever a class comes, the Children's Librarian takes the time to explain the library services and how to make the best use of them. In the case of smaller children, we have story hour. There are no regularly scheduled visits from the schools: the teachers themselves make appointments with the librarian. I wish that a plan could be worked out with the schools, providing for library visits by every second grade and fifth grade class each year. The reason for selecting the second and fifth grades is that if the children do not know about the library by the time they are in the second grade, it is time for an introduction, and when they come back in the fifth grade they are old enough to be instructed in the use of the library and to realize what our services can mean to them personally.

From September through May the Children's Department "publishes" a newspaper. It is a monthly affair, consisting of one mimeographed sheet, and is called the *Library Messenger*. It contains reviews of some of the new books—especially the ones we feel the children will enjoy, but which might, for various reasons, get "lost" on the shelves. Any news about the department or about special activities is brought out in the paper as well, and there is a regular column called "The Question Box." In connection with the latter, a box is kept on one of the tables, and whenever a child has a question about the library, about our new books, or even about books we do not have, he or she drops us a line. Then, as soon as possible, the questions are answered in the paper. For a while one of the most popular questions was, "Why don't you have the Nancy Drew books?"

As far as "public relations" is concerned, our work leaves much to be desired. The Children's Librarian does go out and give talks to PTA groups and various clubs, but this is not enough, or it is not as effective as it should be. Public relations is one of the main things to work on in the future.

### Hennepin County

HELEN A. YOUNG

Director, Hennepin County Library

As short a time as five years ago the regular schedule of the Hennepin County Library Bookmobile included stops at eighty-nine rural schools, where each of the classes and their teachers selected their books from the bookmobile shelves. To find how completely the picture has changed, one has only to drive along any of the highways and byways of our county and see the continuing trend toward the large consolidated elementary school. Today only twenty small rural schools are still functioning, and here the children still come running, on hearing our loud and raucous horn, to choose their own books and often those for parents and younger brothers and sisters at home. Here the bookmobile staff still has contact with the curriculum of the smaller school and with the interests of boys and girls in the more rural areas. For the children now attending the consolidated schools, much of their library service is now a "packaged deal" with classroom collections necessarily taking the place of the "hand-picked" selection of previous years. In the face of progress and of the rapidly expanding population, much of the fun of the monthly visits with hundreds of rural boys and girls has been lost.

In spite of our loss of direct contact with children at their schools, the bookmobile staff is far from losing contact with the increasingly divergent demands from the small fry. Over fifteen hundred families are now being directly served monthly by our bookmobile — and if even one family lacks three or four children, we are not aware of it! From the tiny toddlers whom we can easily satisfy with one of Beatrix Potter's classics or a Tasha Tudor or Lois Lenski, to the atomic-minded nine-year-old scientist and his sophisticated eighth grade sister, we are well acquainted with these and all variations between. It is being able to produce that "right book at the right time" that presents a problem with our necessarily limited but, we hope, well-selected and diverse collection on the bookmobile. To prove that we really rate among life's important happenings, a brief anecdote relates to the small boy who, seeing us approach in the distance,

ran into his house crying, "Mother, Mother, come quick! The Bible is coming!"

The greatest volume of work with children and young people in our county library system is done in and through our twenty-three branch libraries. Here where the juvenile circulation is increasing rapidly our major problem is maintaining the flow of books to keep up with the demand. In many of our branches, summer reading programs have proved successful. This past summer a "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea" theme was popular, with children donning divers' suits to complete the voyage to the bottom of the ocean. Most attractive certificates, abounding in deep sea divers and underwater flora and fauna, provided the necessary "bait," and picnics and parties at various branches climaxed the summer. And who of us can say that our program was not worth while to the youngster who gleefully reported his supreme moment of achievement — learning to balance a peanut on his nose! — upon reading "How to make an earth quake." To encourage reading for pleasure during the other nine months of the year, the Hennepin County Library also presents reading certificates at the end of the school year to the boys and girls who have read and reported briefly on twelve books chosen from approved lists. Whenever we are tempted to discontinue this practice, we are met with protests from our branch librarians, from teachers, and from the children themselves. This seemingly slight recognition of achievement has proved valuable in the eyes of enough children to warrant its continuation. And we remember one child who was heartbroken to have to move out of our county after earning five certificates in five years. Arrangements were made by her branch librarian which enabled her to receive her coveted diploma the following year.

Story hours of course are always popular in the branches that have a regular program. Our newest trial balloon is a pre-school age story hour. Another project, which has become a custom at our Wayzata branch, is the invitation each spring to all classes in the third through sixth grades to visit the library. A very interested Friends of the Library organization assists in handling the children, in story telling, and in providing "treats" to the entire six or seven hundred visitors. Many families have been introduced

to the library through this planned visit.

In spite of all threatening distractions, radio, movies, TV, we are finding that more and more families are visiting our libraries as a group, talking over their selections of books among themselves, and reporting on the pleasures of reading aloud at home. We listen with amusement and divided sympathy to the maternal outcry, "Darling, not that book again! I'll scream if I have to read *Horton Hatches the Egg* one more time. Look, darling, at the card, we've had that book out five times!" "That's why," Darling wails, "that's why I have to have this one!" And we listen even more delightedly to the comments of the parents who are deriving real enjoyment from sharing with their children such experiences as *Rabbit Hill*, *Stuart Little*, and *Charlotte's Web*. To those and other parents we suggest Annis Duff's *Bequest of Wings*.

At long last we felt that we had come triumphantly through the Davy Crockett era on hearing that one young tomboy plopped down three books on the desk with the remark, "Boy, were these swell books! They were even better than Davy Crockett! Got any more like them?" The titles, *Nancy Hanks of Wilderness Road*, *On Indian Trails with Daniel Boone*, and *Westward the Course* indicate the healthy influence of the Crockett regime.

While a feeling of frustration sometimes overcomes us as we struggle to keep up with the oncoming tide of readers, we take a deep breath and give thanks that enough Johnnies and Janies can read to make our work a continuing challenge.

### Hibbing

MRS. LOIS B. SMILAND

*Hibbing Public Library patron and former staff member*

Behind the spacious and modern façade of the new Hibbing Public Library lies a unique story of a library's growth and its successful efforts to keep up with a spirited mining community. Neither the moving of the town to another site nor the resulting instability of cultural endeavors kept Hibbing from having continuous library service.

Even in the pioneering days of the Mesaba Iron Range at the beginning of the century,

the hardy settlers of Hibbing were turning their thoughts to books and education. Not long after the first mines were in operation and homes and stores started to form the nucleus of Hibbing, enterprising citizens asked for a library.

Library service in Hibbing began with the hobby of "Captain" Walter McCormack, a switchman at a railroad crossing. His little shack held 100-odd volumes, and this became the exchange place for all those interested in reading. Fond of reading, Mr. McCormack collected books wherever he could; and not content with reading them himself, he loaned them to others. Seeing the community interest in Captain McCormack's "library," the Saturday Club, a women's literary organization, circulated and presented a petition to the village council asking that a library be founded in Hibbing. Hibbing's formal library service resulted from the efforts and foresight of Captain McCormack and the Saturday Club.

By 1906 a library board was appointed, and in 1907 a Carnegie grant of \$25,000 was received. The next year a new library was opened to the public. In 1916 it was remodeled and enlarged to three times its original capacity.

Children's work officially began when the first trained children's librarian was appointed in 1914. Louise Richardson was followed by another children's librarian, Celia Frost, who was head of the Children's Department until 1921. Mary Radford and Helen Prall were in charge until 1931. Isabel Thouin, the third professional children's librarian, was appointed and holds the position at the present time. Katherine O'Donnell was in charge of the Department while Miss Thouin was on a leave of absence in 1937 and 1938.

Hibbing has an unusual history, which affected the growth of the library. For the past thirty years the old Hibbing, which is called North Hibbing today, has slowly been devoured by the encroaching mines. In order to make valuable iron ore deposits available, the original village was moved two miles south to the present site, which was formally known as Alice Location.

The first library was built in the then thriving Old Hibbing. Even before the town was moved, the outskirts of Old Hibbing were rapidly expanding; and it was realized that the people on the fringes of the city

were in need of library service. A branch was established in the Location of Alice. At that time the branch library and a drug store were the only brightly lighted buildings in Alice. As buildings from Old Hibbing began to be moved to Alice to form a new town, the branch library became a community center. When Alice Location became the new Hibbing, the branch library was moved to the basement of the village hall.

By 1941 a new adult branch was opened, and the branch library in the village hall was used exclusively as a children's branch. Children's library service was also maintained in the original library in Old Hibbing.

Library service did not end with the main library in Old Hibbing or the children's branch in New Hibbing. As early as 1918 a library bus was purchased to bring books to every road camp and mining location on the outskirts of Hibbing. The first walk-in bookmobile in the United States was this bus in Hibbing, where the Greyhound Bus Lines also originated. This library service was discontinued in 1952 because a large number of people from the mining locations were moving to town.

The activities of the Children's Department have kept pace with a town "on the move." They have been many and varied, to keep up with the colorful history of the town and the library itself. Attractive and meaningful exhibits have publicized ideas and books throughout the years. Story hours, open house, reading programs, class visits, special Book Week programs, book fairs, plays are a few of the activities.

One of the most effective reading projects was inaugurated in 1932 under the direction of Miss Thouin. The winter reading program, which is held in connection with the Elementary Education Department of the Hibbing Public Schools, is designed to offer a program of supervised reading for children from grades one through eight. Reading lists suitable for each grade are compiled by the Children's Librarian, a committee of teachers, and the School Librarian. The children are encouraged to pick up their reading lists at the Children's Department. They are required to read a specified number of books and report on the titles either orally or in written form to the teachers. At the end of the school year each child who

has completed his reading project is awarded a diploma.

The Children's Department also assists teachers in providing supplementary material for use in the classroom. Upon the request of a teacher, the librarian makes up a collection of books on a given unit of study. These are sent to the various schools for four-week periods, with one renewal if desired.

Besides the summer reading programs, one unusual summertime activity was a bird and wild flower project. In order to tie in nature study with books, children brought reports on wild flowers and birds to the library. Each child who reported and identified his find was given an opportunity to select an attractive colored cut of the bird or flower which he had seen and place it upon a chart depicting a woodland scene. On another chart, he placed his name along with the name of his discovery.

As in every children's library, the most concentrated activities have taken place during Book Week. Special exhibits were prepared, and classes made visits to the library. Annually, for several years, a Book Week play was presented by the patrons of the Children's Department, under the direction of the Children's Librarian. The children also perform at the parties that are part of Book Week celebrations.

Juvenile circulation figures reflect the growth of the Hibbing Library system and have resulted in plans for future expansion of juvenile services.

In 1915 the total juvenile circulation was over 34,000, which grew to 96,000 in 1925 and reached the figure of 118,000 in 1935. The juvenile circulation has averaged about 79,000 in the years between 1935 and the present. This decrease is due to several factors. The most important was that, by 1940, the bulk of the population had shifted from North Hibbing to the new site in South Hibbing, a distance of two miles. Since the main juvenile collection was still in North Hibbing, the circulation decreased. When the library bus was discontinued, shortly afterwards circulation of juvenile books was reduced rather sharply.

In 1953 the new library was opened on a lot donated by the Oliver Iron Mining Company to the village for library use. Only the adult portion of the library was constructed, as funds were not available to include the

children's section, which is now located in the village hall, across the street from the library. Funds to complete the building will come from the sale of the North Hibbing library property to mining interests. When the children's wing of the new building is completed, an expanded children's program will go into effect, but at present it is uncertain when the new wing will be built. The plans, now in the blueprint stage, allow ample space for story hours, exhibits, and related film and music programs. A Youth Department will be developed.

The turbulent days of moving to new locations are over for the Hibbing Public Library. With the addition of a functional wing to the new building and the expansion of facilities and hours of service to the children and their parents, the Children's Department looks forward to a bright future.

### Mankato

#### MAUD HART LOVELACE

I am to write in particular of my recollections of the Children's Room in the Mankato Free Public Library, but please allow me to consider first the world into which that Children's Room was born! It was a world (the library was built, with a Carnegie grant, in 1903) in which most home libraries were very limited. In our home we had only what books could be held in the top of a breakfront desk . . . although my mother loved books, and by the time my younger sister, Helen, began to read, we had grown to a full-sized mission oak bookcase which shortly acquired a twin.

I can still see and feel the books in that breakfront desk. They gave us children intense pleasure, but it was a pleasure mixed with pain, for they included such tear-wringers as *Black Beauty*, *Beautiful Joe*, *Elsie Dinsmore* (the first one only), *The Lamplighter*, *Queechy*, and *The Wide Wide World*. More cheerful were *The Five Little Peppers*, *Editha's Burglar*, and *The Birds' Christmas Carol*. The last two provided recitations for my always reciting, singing, or dancing older sister, Kathleen. Also for Kathleen, probably, there was a fat book of Recitations and Readings (I can't recall the actual title) which I too devoured. Its contents ranged from "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck" to a blood-curdling account of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Even more enthralling to me were the travel lectures of John L. Stoddard. I read them through, from one red marbled cover to the other, all ten volumes. I have the old set now, and in the changed world geography of 1952, I found it very useful when writing *Betsy and the Great World*, which dealt with travels in 1914.

Other adult books that Kathleen and I raced through were *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. I kept taking off the shelf and trying to read *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, but it always baffled me, as did *Wee MacGregor*.

Our mother read the popular novels of the day: *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall*, *The Helmet of Navarre*, *When Knighthood Was in Flower*. Kathleen and I attempted them, too, and, after warnings to be sure our hands were clean, we were allowed to leaf through Owen Meredith's *Lucille*. This, in an ornate binding, sat on the parlor table. (My husband says that his "All right, if you wash your hands" book was *Twenty Decisive Battles of the World*, which he read over and over . . . hands properly washed, of course . . . lying flat on his stomach on his favorite aunt's parlor floor.)

The world, before the coming of library Children's Rooms, was a world for book borrowers. A fascinating dining room cupboard, in the home of my Best Friend across the street, contributed the boys' stories of the lovable Father Finn. Although a Protestant, I read avidly, along with "Tacy," *Tom Playfair, or Making a Start*, *Percy Wynn, or Making a Boy of Him*, and all the rest.

I remember the blue frame house with a wide porch, halfway down our hilly street, from which one borrowed the Horatio Alger books, and the red brick house with arched windows where one borrowed *Toby Tyler*, or *Ten Weeks with a Circus*, and the yellow brick house with a cupola, where some friends of Kathleen's had the complete set of Elsie Dinsmore books, along with an intriguing story called *Two Little Pilgrims' Progress*. This had nothing to do with Bunyan but concerned the adventures of two runaway farm children at the Chicago World's Fair. Frances Hodgson Burnett wrote it, I think.

Wreathed in glory in my memory is the neat tan house with brown trimmings where one borrowed *Little Women*. I used to bor-

row it, read it through, reluctantly return it, and if it were returned on Monday, by Wednesday I was back on the doorstep, bright and smiling, to borrow it again.

It was my borrowing which at last conspired with Andrew Carnegie to give me the boon of a Children's Room.

I started borrowing from our red-cheeked, country-bred hired girl. Her treasures were paper-backed novels, *Lady Audley's Secret*, and that ilk. Some instinct told me to read them in strict seclusion but, as I have related in *Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown*, my secret, like Lady Audley's, was discovered.

My father and mother became aware of how thoroughly the family bookshelf and all neighboring bookshelves had been explored. They conferred together upon my love for reading and my often announced intention of becoming an author, and conceived between them a truly beautiful plan.

Shortly before, the gleaming white library, its arched entrance flanked by potted palms, had been opened to the public down on tree-lined Broad Street. Since 1894 there had been an organized library in some second-floor rooms on the main business street, but I had never been inside it. No doubt my mother got the historical novels there.

This humble collection, which grew into the excellent library I remember, had been sponsored by the Social Science Club of which, much later, my father was a member. How he used to wrestle with the writing of "papers" to be read before this august group! I still cherish those laboriously written "papers." In the 'nineties, I feel sure, he was too busy with his shoe store and his growing family for such intellectual pursuits, but he was always interested in a Free Public Library. And now it was his answer to a book-borrowing daughter of ten or so, who wished to be an author.

The new temple of reading was far away from our hillside home. My father's plan was to let me take out a library card, and then, every other week, go down to the Library and spend the day. I was to go out for lunch . . . all by myself . . . at a nearby bakery and in the late afternoon bring home a load of books to be returned on the next library visit.

I started these wonderful trips in the winter, I think, for I recall a fire in the fireplace of the Children's Room. There was a painting above it called "The Isle of Delos." And

I recall snow sifting past the windows as I read at one of the low comfortable tables . . . after browsing blissfully along the so-accessible shelves.

My husband says that if he were to be put down in the dark before the old Detroit, Michigan, Public Library he could find his way to the basement Children's Room and the shelf behind the librarian's desk where the Andrew Lang fairy books reposed.

My favorite shelf, I am sure, contained the works of Louisa M. Alcott, but I too remember vividly Lang's *Blue Fairy Book*, *Crimson Fairy Book*, *Orange Fairy Book*, and all the gaily hued line. I remember also Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, and *Alice in Wonderland* seen for the first time in fine editions . . . some with colored pictures.

I remember discovering *Uncle Remus* (the dialect was hard), *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*, *A Dog of Flanders*, *Captain January*, *The Little Lame Prince*. If I yearned toward anything obviously too young for a girl old enough to spend the day alone at the library, I took it home to read to Helen. I read her most of the "Little Colonel" books. (A child from Louisville came to visit in Mankato and claimed that the Little Colonel was real and that she had seen her and touched her!)

Helen, enormous eyes looking out from her English bob, listened with the charmed attention one might expect from a future librarian. In later years when she had become Helen Hart Fowler, she was assigned to the library of Jefferson Junior High School, in Minneapolis, and herself checked out books for eager children.

The first Mankato librarian, according to the records, was a Minnie McGraw. The librarian of my memory and the Betsy-Tacy books is doubtless a composite of her and the Miss Maud van Buren who followed, and various of their assistants. To someone extraordinarily gentle and kind, I soon confided that I proposed to be a writer and wanted to read the classics. I was guided to Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* and recall in a glowing panorama *Tanglewood Tales* (they were soon in the home bookcase), *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Arabian Nights Entertainment*, *King Arthur and His Court*, *Robinhood* . . .

My husband tells me that at an early age he made a secret resolution to read through

the entire book collection of the Detroit Public Library. He began with the A's and proceeded systematically along the alphabet until the vastness of his project dawned and he abandoned it at last. I did not discipline myself to that extent but roamed with regal independence around my new-found kingdom.

Children who have grown up amid the plenitude of modern libraries may not remember quite so vividly as I their introductions to their Children's Rooms. Or perhaps they do? On thinking it over, I believe that all boys and girls who love to read share my remembered sense of richness, luxury, and largesse beyond compare on being presented with unnumbered books about fairies, heroes, giants, strange lands, and other boys and girls like themselves. And of course in childhood there are also unnumbered empty hours in which to collect and hoard such precious gold.

### Minneapolis

MRS. PHYLLIS F. BRYAN

*Co-ordinator of Work with Children  
Minneapolis Public Library*

THE LIBRARY BOARD  
of the City of Minneapolis  
requests the honor of your presence  
at the opening of the  
Public Library Building  
Monday, December 16th, 1889  
from four until ten o'clock

The Minneapolis Tribune of the following day was ecstatic in its praises of the building and the occasion. "The citizens of Minneapolis, without reference to social position or business standing simply turned out en masse to look over their beautiful building." Much was written of the elegant carpeting and velvet draperies in the ladies' reading room, the magnificent mantels above the fireplaces, the potted palms and other choice plants on the stair landings, the orchestra which "discoursed appropriate music." But nothing was said of a spot for the children. Nevertheless, the first book circulated from the Minneapolis Public Library was *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.

The early accession records of the Athenaeum, which preceded the public li-

brary and formed the core of its first collection, list a number of children's books. So the children had something to come for, and come they did. Gratia Countryman, a young assistant at that time, sought to meet the unexpected demand by collecting books for children on a truck and charging them at the end of the desk, out of the way of the adult patrons. Soon it became necessary to take the book truck down to the end of the corridor on the ground floor.

Before the year 1890 was out a grille had been placed around part of the corridor area and it was used as a reading room for children. In 1892 shelves were installed and a small collection of books brought down. In 1893 all children's books were brought to the corridor, and a special assistant was placed in charge of them. Dr. Hosmer, the second Librarian, remarked in his report of that year, "Adults were relieved of much inconvenient crowding which under the old arrangement, had become exceedingly embarrassing."

In a later report Miss Countryman, by then Librarian, stated that Minneapolis was thus the first to recognize the importance of children's work by setting aside a room for their use, with open shelf privileges and with a special assistant. Though this claim has since been disputed, it was substantiated by Anne Carroll Moore when, in addressing the American Library Association Conference at Lake Minnetonka in 1908, she gave credit to Minneapolis for having the first children's room. The 1904 annual report mentions the Children's Department separately for the first time. At that time too, the salary of the Children's Librarian was raised to \$70 a month! The Librarian's report in 1905 remarked, "The order in the room is most excellent and no department is better equipped or more satisfactorily managed than this department."

In 1905 a new wing was built, and in March of 1906 the children's room occupied a part of it. It was a large room, opening onto the street and "decorated in soft and restful colors." Miss Countryman added, "New tables and chairs of varying heights fill the beautiful reading room, cheery pictures are on the walls and picture stereopticon maps for geography study and dissected maps are at hand for restless children." The pressure of an expanding

library system, however, soon made it necessary to move the Children's Department into the former Document Room—which is its present location.

Early children's librarians were indeed pioneers in their field. In 1905 the nucleus of a catalogue was started with the list of 1,053 books prepared by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and the Cleveland Public Library. In 1913 Miss Bartleson reported steady progress with 1,722 cards written and filed that year.

In 1914 she said, "The cataloging of all fiction and all class books with the exception of those included in readers and natural science has been completed." In 1908 a picture collection was started, work on which is mentioned in many subsequent reports. Since the book collection could not possibly supply the school requests for poems and songs for special holidays, this material was reprinted on multigraph and circulated individually, 3,072 such multigraphed poems being circulated in 1912.

Storytelling has always been an important part of children's work in Minneapolis. Prior to 1911 storytelling was done by outsiders—pupils from Miss Wood's school and other women from the community. In 1911, however, Miss Bartleson observed, "We are this winter following a somewhat different plan and are having the stories told by the assistants in charge; our ultimate aim being to attract the children particularly to the assistant, inspiring confidence in her ability to select their reading for them."

In the early days of children's work in Minneapolis, all of the work with schools was carried on by the central children's room. By 1913 reports indicated that the pressure of work warranted a separation into two departments. In 1916 this was accomplished.

The 1916 report also stressed the increasing change in the neighborhood of the central library, which was fast becoming one of rooming houses and business establishments.

Until the appointment of a Coordinator of Work with Children in 1939, the central children's room was responsible for the preparation of reading lists on special subjects and for special occasions. One of the first to be prepared, "Books for Christmas Gifts," is still one of the most popular and

has become an integral part of our Book Week preparations. Another indication that times haven't changed too much is a comment in the 1914 annual report on the distribution of "How To" lists. "The call was overwhelming—there was no possibility of supplying the demand on these special subjects."

For several years the central Children's Room held "How to Make Things" exhibits. In 1915 Miss Ferguson reported that the war influenced the boys' contribution: "Our navy was entirely adequate for any demands whether defensive or aggressive. A new toy appeared this year, the periscope, which is merely such a skillful arrangement of two mirrors that the enemy's every move may be watched."

Again in 1916 she told of a white elephant that was brought to the exhibit, a life-size aeroplane made by two little boys, who wheeled it to the library at five o'clock one morning when the streets were clear. "It was 18 feet long and proportionately wide and correspondingly rickety, and without doubt the largest thing in Minneapolis that only cost twenty cents."

As library work with children has spread into branches and stations throughout the city, the central Children's Room has remained more or less the hub of all activity. It contains the complete collection of juvenile titles, which may be duplicated according to need in extension agencies. Theoretically it is the training room for new assistants, though the rapid turnover of staff does not always make this practical. It houses special collections such as foreign books, fine editions, and books for a child's own library. It is responsible for indexing book reviews, collecting bibliographies, and maintaining exchange of exhibit and publicity material.

Needless to say to anyone who is familiar with the central library in Minneapolis, the Children's Room has long since outgrown its quarters and finds itself hampered on all sides by lack of space and facilities. No department looks forward more eagerly to the proposed new building. After its opening the press notices will not be able to ignore the modern facilities of the Children's Room.

## Moorhead

MYRTLE T. RUNDQUIST

*Librarian, Moorhead Public Library*

When the Moorhead Public Library Carnegie Building was opened in 1906, definite provisions were made for serving the children of the community. Nelle Olson, the first librarian, from the very start planned for both adult and children's library service. The south wing of the main floor was furnished with two library tables and a dozen chairs for children. The first book to be accessioned was a juvenile book, Abbott's *Rollo in Naples*. By January 1, 1907, 268 books for children had been added, and 270 of the total of 644 registered borrowers were children.

During the first few years books were borrowed from the State Traveling Library to supplement the local collection. Many books were donated by individuals, and in 1908 the high school contributed two hundred books. Circulation records show that fifty percent of the books circulated the first year were children's books.

In the records, there is frequent mention of the planning done for children. One report states that "Friday after Thanksgiving Day 1907 was an Open Morning for the children . . . who thronged the building and spent the morning reading, looking at pictures and listening to songs" (by local women). The library was used a great deal during Christmas vacation. "Children were also permitted Sunday afternoons when members of the Women's Club were in charge."

Early in 1908, special time was set aside for the smaller children, and library instruction was given to the upper grades. The next year a new bookcase was added to the children's wing as well as a "small low table on which to keep picture books." In 1917 Ethel McCubrey, Librarian, reported that regular Story Hours were held.

Visual-aids material was also provided. In January, 1917, "new stereoscope pictures" were added for the children and afforded "much pleasure and interest for the children as well as grown-ups."

The November, 1919, Librarian's report stated that the "reading rooms were used to their capacity and the question of trans-

ferring the children's library downstairs to give more space and more study atmosphere should be taken into consideration." But it was not until April of 1921 that a move was actually made to make the Lecture Room into a Children's Room. For this purpose a sum not to exceed \$200 in addition to the Lecture Fund was voted. The small tables and chairs from the main floor south wing were moved downstairs to the Lecture Room, the stage platform was removed and shelving added. In August the Library Board appointed a committee to formulate regulations for conducting the Children's Library. It was voted to keep the Children's Room open from 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. each school day and from 1:30 to 5:30 P.M. on Saturdays but to keep it closed on holidays and Sundays. By October of that year the books had been re-shelved downstairs. Gudrun Aasgaard was put in charge of the Children's Room. From then on until quite recent times the one assistant to the librarian took charge of the Children's Room when it was open. Much of the time the children were permitted to go downstairs to select their own books and then bring them to the desk on the main floor to be checked out.

In 1922 and for some years following, Mrs. Roe Remington, a professional elocution teacher, conducted Story Hours which attracted large audiences. One Saturday's records show attendance of 102.

The November, 1920, report makes the first mention of a display of children's books during Book Week. From then on it has been observed yearly, with new books displayed and with special programs and plans. The librarians frequently reported the great need for more books, particularly among the older boys and girls, and the great enthusiasm with which the children always greeted the receipt of new book collections. The books must have seen heavy use in the earlier days of the library: the librarian frequently had to discard large numbers because they were worn out, and she lamented the fact that the supply of new books was so limited.

From the very beginning the schools were heavy users of the public library. The 1921 report states that "every grade in the city schools has had a collection of books . . ." from the public library. The schools continued to draw heavily on the book collec-

tion at the public library, and in 1921 the Board voted to request \$300 from the Board of Education "in consideration of the services to the pupils of the city schools." This request was turned down. The teachers often brought their classes to the library for library instruction and thus added many new borrowers. Circulation was good, and the need for replacing worn out titles was great. After the high school library was completed in 1930, the Public Library's reference service to high school pupils was lessened somewhat.

In November, 1931, Ethel McCubrey reported that "the annual Book Week for children was very gratifying. Of the 300 new books that went on the shelves in the juvenile department, none are seen on the shelves, so frequently have they been taken out—despite the fact we allowed but one new book at a time to a child."

The following year, Marion Phillips, Librarian, reported that October and November "have been interesting months in the Children's Room. The Story Hours begun in September have continued with increasing interest and attendance. The student assistants are in charge and rotate the work among them. Hallowe'en was observed with a real party, when a witch told fortunes, the youngsters bobbed for apples, Hallowe'en stories were told, and refreshments served." The following year mention was first made of using two store windows for displaying children's books to attract the attention of people who did not come to the library.

It was not until July of 1950 that a trained librarian was hired to take charge of the Children's Room. With the large number of children using the library, it was desirable to have a trained person who could devote special care to the selection of books and plan special activities that would encourage the children to use them. The summer reading clubs have been very popular. In theme they have varied from Saddle - Up - and - Ride - West to Fireman's Club. The enrollment has steadily increased. In 1950, 180 children were enrolled and read 5,300 books. In 1955, 338 children were enrolled and read over 10,000 books. Competition is discouraged, but each child reports on all books read and is helped to read books according to his level of ability. Saturday Story Hours are held regularly,

with films, puppet plays, and recordings used and, of course, stories both told and read. Book Week is observed every year with special displays in the library and downtown. Often the Children's Librarian takes books to groups in the community. The present book collection consists of 6,000 volumes, and these are used by 1,735 children, from grades one through eight, who are registered in the Children's Room. The junior high school people prefer to select books from the teen-age shelf on the main floor, even though many of them are still registered in the Children's Room. Children are permitted to use adult material whenever they need material of such a nature and may check it out after it has been approved by the librarian. Parents often use the Children's Room to get books for pre-school children, or for children who are ill, or for retarded children who need help during vacations.

### New Ulm

ALMA SCOTT

"New Ulm must have had wonderful library facilities to have produced a Wanda Gag." The words, coming from a children's librarian, were spoken hopefully.

As one librarian to another, it would have been gratifying to have been able to give an affirmative reply. Yet it remains a tragic commentary that, aside from a small traveling book shelf furnished by the Minnesota Public Library Commission, there were no library facilities whatever in the city of Wanda Gag's birth. Wanda's heritage consisted, instead, of imaginative parents, a small but good home library, and grandparents with a rich background in folklore.

Wanda Gag had, in fact, achieved an international reputation as an artist and author-artist of children's books before New Ulm had a public library. It materialized, then, only after a struggle of such proportions that it makes interesting library history indeed.

New Ulm was founded in 1854 by two groups of colonists—many of them skilled artisans and far-sighted idealists of Austrian, Bohemian, or German origin. They had selected the picturesque spot where the Minnesota and Cottonwood Rivers met to

build their village—a spot walled in by hills which symbolized so well the spirit of the settlement-to-be. For it was planned to be a little Utopia, a free and independent city in a free and independent land where the pioneers hoped to preserve the best of the European culture which they had brought with them, and, at the same time, to enjoy the freedom of a democracy, leaving behind them the tyrannies of European governments.

And these early colonists made a very real contribution. They planned the city with efficiency and precision, following well-laid plans. They ran their own schools by what they considered to be the highest standards and they organized a library, consisting largely of German classics, within the Turner Hall.

The city survived an Indian outbreak in 1862 and a tornado in 1881. With true German thrift and determination it was rebuilt, upon stronger foundations than ever, after these shattering disasters.

Because of the town's location and natural resources, its prosperity was inevitable. Vast clay beds provided materials for brick and tile; granite quarries furnished crushed rock for road development which, together with lavish deposits of fine gravel and sand, stimulated building programs and added to the city's wealth.

Two railroads were built to serve the town, for it was in the heart of fine agricultural lands. "Preachers and lawyers," who had been excluded from the town by early provisos, had won admission. The schools, after a long and bitter fight, were put under state supervision. A municipal electric plant was built, and industries flourished.

But before Wanda Gag was born the Turner Hall library had fallen into disuse. Interest in Old World culture was waning, and interest in the culture of the new world was not yet strong enough to take its place.

During the winter of 1898-99 a supreme effort was made to organize a library in New Ulm. On March 4, 1899, the New Ulm Library Association was organized, and the Library Board, "by dint of hard work" (as the contemporary reports put it) and "benefit programs," raised enough money to rent a room and open a library of 378 volumes. Public spirited citizens and clubs carried on the work against tremen-

ous odds. In 1900 the matter of a public library was submitted to popular vote at the city election. The issue was lost. Numerous petitions to the city council resulted in an appropriation of \$150 in 1901, but after that the city refused even to furnish the lights for the library, and the heroic efforts of the few had failed.

Incredible as it may seem thirty years went by with library matters at a complete standstill. This city of New Ulm, with its obvious prosperity and its great civic pride, was to become the only city of its size within the State of Minnesota to remain without public library facilities. Somewhere along the line a Carnegie Library had been voted down to further darken the picture.

In material ways there had been great advancement. There were excellent schools, large modern hospitals, numerous manufacturing plants, flourishing retail stores, and active business organizations. Two trunk highways had flung their banners across the city. An active historical society had done much to preserve the history of Brown County, and New Ulm already had more than its share of historic markers.

Surely the earmarks of distinction, of thrift, and prosperity were great, and yet this town was still without a library. A school reading room, beginning with a few small shelves, had developed into a moderate-sized library which was open to the public two nights a week, but the public library idea was long in coming.

In 1930, a prominent citizen, N. Henningsen, died. Together with others, Mr. Henningsen had held—and no doubt abandoned—dreams for a public library. He had owned a gracious home on a double lot at the corner of Broadway and First North Streets. This property was only one block from the heart of the business district, and one block from the high school, a central location ideal for library purposes.

Fortunately there was in New Ulm, at this time, a great champion of cultural interests—Fred W. Johnson, brother of Minnesota's former governor, John A. Johnson. He had already accomplished for New Ulm a beautifully landscaped boulevard on Broadway; he had persuaded the town to build Riverside Park along the Minnesota River and had sponsored the building of an athletic field named "Johnson Field" in his honor. Since the early 1900's Mr. Johnson

had tried to revive an interest in a public library; he had backed every effort. Now, at the death of Mr. Henningsen, the thought came to him that a library might be built on the site of the Henningsen property. Administrator of the Henningsen Estate was Adolph G. Meile. Mr. Johnson, together with August Hummel and Henry Held, called on Mr. Meile, suggesting that the corner lot be donated for library purposes, by the heirs, as a fitting memorial to Mr. Henningsen. Mr. Johnson, himself, offered to buy the Henningsen home on the adjacent lot so as to expedite matters.

An oil company had already requested the valuable corner property for an oil station, but Mr. Meile, too, had always fought to bring a library into being and, though he himself was one of the heirs to the Henningsen property, he did everything in his power to cancel the contract and to persuade the remaining heirs to deed this corner to the city.

Litigations following were long and difficult, but in the end the property was given to the city with the provision that a library must be erected within the next five years. If no library were built within the allotted time, the property would revert back to the Henningsen heirs.

One, two, and three years went by. In August of 1933 Clara Baldwin of the State Library Division met with the Brown County Commissioners and the City Council of New Ulm in an effort to organize a county library. She told them of ways and means to accomplish this end—of federal appropriations available, and of benefits to be gained, but the county refused to bestir itself. If there was so much surplus money, suggested one councilman, why not pay off the people who had lost their savings in bank failures! And the old-timers sat comfortably in the homes which they had won through hard-earned success. As they saw it, libraries were folderols of education. It was quite evident that they had done very well for themselves without them! They were content, and their vast inertia could not easily be overcome. Many retired farmers resisted all progress which might mean higher taxes. All efforts in behalf of the library were met with stolid resistance. Apparently New Ulm's disinterest in the matter was complete.

But a small group of progressives, still

headed by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Meile, would not accept defeat. For two years they worked, suggesting now that the library be supported by surplus funds from the municipal heating plant — so as not to raise the local taxes — and that the ground floor be devoted to a museum. Probably it was the joint sincerity of the two leaders, together with their genuine altruism, that eventually gave their pleas the weight required.

At any rate, the library was finally voted into being and the ground was broken almost at the last moment when it could legally be claimed for the city.

After the decision had been definitely made, however, and it had become known that the library was to become a reality, it seemed that the whole town (or nearly so) came forward to rush it into being. Now it was pushed in all haste, and as soon as the walls were finished and the city heat was piped into the building, a librarian and her assistant were put to work. Erna Holzinger, former school librarian, was the chief librarian — I was the assistant.

Ankle-deep we waded through refuse left by the workmen, who were still building. Unprotected stair wells yawned at our feet by day and haunted our dreams by night! Hundreds of books had been donated by the people of the town — gift books in limp leather covers, books in flowery padded covers, expressing the tender sentiments of the Gay Nineties, an automotive encyclopedia set with a 1904 imprint, dozens of *Messages of the Presidents*, shelves of books on "Tilden" diets, complete sets of Crawford and others, the sentimental books of Meade, the *Rover Series*, and the *Bobbsey Twins* for our children's shelves. We appreciated the givers more than their gifts, but there were also those who had built up excellent private libraries for want of a public library, and so we received an unusual collection on music, a well chosen group of books on the drama, the works of Shakespeare, Dumas, Thackeray, Dickens, Conrad, Poe, and others. We had a gift set of the *Oxford Dictionary*, a fair start on religious philosophy, a good collection of the classics in the field of history and \$1,500 for new books.

It wasn't much, but we handled all the books, and those that we selected for the shelves, we knew well. Volunteers helped

us with the mechanical processes of pasting pockets, mending books, etc., and on February 15, 1937, the doors of the library were thrown open to the public. There were about 4,000 books on the shelves and only we knew that perhaps two-thirds of them were dead timber, but we had high hopes for the future. Those who had long hungered for a library came, and for them we did our best with the new books we had, and those who came because of curiosity often left, too, with books in hand. And our books served better than we had dared to hope, for many of the townspeople had read little, and so all things were new.

The building design, which had finally caught the fancy of the town, was artistic enough in appearance and would have served beautifully in some sunny climate, but it left something to be desired in Minnesota. Magnificent, swinging aluminum doors, costing nearly one thousand dollars each, swung wide and friendly — but the snows drifted in and the oil congealed in the hinges so that the doors gaped and let in the wintry blasts! With the spring rains torrents of water poured in through the decorative doors and made lakes and rivers of halls and stairways. But we took this with equanimity. "After all," said the people, "we have the library only *because* of the doors!" And I believe the statement was founded on fact, for, so goes the tale, there was a deadlock in the council which had been designated to vote upon the library in the first place. Three were in favor of a library and three were against it. Then the library plans with the spectacular aluminum doors were presented, and one of the three staunch supporters of the library suggested that they seemed impractical. At this, one of the opposing three stated vehemently that he, for one, would not vote for the library unless the doors were included. "Oh," said one of the friends quickly, "You *will* vote for it if we keep the doors!" And unable to extricate himself quickly and gracefully, the opponent had then voted in favor of the library and its case had been won.

Consequently we had a certain affection for the doors—but there were other things. The windows were set high up in the walls, quite out of reach, and could be opened only with great difficulty. They had been planned for air-conditioning which had not

materialized. The long flat roof collected Minnesota's snows and held the floods of summer rain, which leaked down the walls and into the library.

Since no one who knew anything about library buildings had been consulted in drawing up the plans, we had the shell of a building, with nice open shelves, but with no storage space except in a most inaccessible basement; we had no wash basin on the library level, and there were high outside, as well as inside, steps leading to the one large room which constituted the library.

In addition, there was the museum on the ground floor, which had a way of overflowing into the library in spite of our spirited protests. The arrival of a historic cannon in a huge glass exhibit case marked the high spot of this invasion. To be sure, this had not been intended for the library, but, since the workmen had forgotten to check the measurements of the case, it was too large for the museum door, and into the library it came. There it squatted in a central spot — with the cannon aimed directly at the circulation desk!

This was a little too much for some of the patrons to take and, after a few years, assisted by a leverage of ridicule, the cannon was removed and with it the other antiquities.

The space thus acquired was now dedicated to children, and it was here that story hours and record-listening programs began to take place on Saturday mornings.

The library's original holdings of children's books were pitifully meager. Sometimes, at the end of a busy day, we could hold in one hand the books remaining on a given shelf. For a number of years the total book budget was only \$500, and there was, after all, a school library, so that many believed that the public library should serve an adult population only.

Yet from the very start more than fifty per cent of the total circulation could be credited to the children of the town, and soon the children themselves seemed to enlist the interest of parents, and matters began to solve themselves. Now, after eighteen years, there are as many books in the children's section as there were in the entire library when it was opened, and last year the circulation of children's books was

approximately 43,000 out of a total circulation of 73,000.

Story and music hours, begun by Miss Holzinger, continue at present under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Fering and Bertha Ruemke. Eight rural schools in the area are also served by the New Ulm Public Library. These schools pay the library twelve dollars for the school year, and this amount entitles them to all the books they need for the term. In turn the State of Minnesota credits each participating rural school with the amount of twelve dollars toward its book-buying fund.

At the time of her sudden death on October 13th of this year, Miss Holzinger was working for a separate children's room. Funds were already beginning to be set aside for this purpose and hopes seemed to be at their brightest. In the minds and hearts of New Ulm's interested citizens there is a firm belief that the project will be carried through by her successor.

A fitting nucleus for a children's room at New Ulm is a complete set of Wanda Gag's publications for display purposes, besides the circulating copies. These books were a gift from the Fritsche family. Through the efforts of the local branch of the American Association of University Women, in cooperation with Earle Humphreys,\* the city possesses, in addition, a print collection of Wanda's lithographs second only to the collection owned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

\* \* \*

It may be that New Ulm will never produce another Wanda Gag, but there are many original and gifted spirits to be found among the children. If, in the generations to be, even one of these will come with generous talents for all to enjoy, the library may well claim to have had a part in cultivating and giving these talents to the world.

### Red Wing

JEAN GARDINER SMITH

*Children's Librarian  
Carnegie-Lawther Library*

Perhaps the particular merit to read into the history of the Children's Room in Red Wing lies in the assurance that library serv-

\*In private life Wanda Gag was Mrs. Earle Humphreys.

ice can be achieved despite the hazards of architecture and budget. Given Head Librarians and Library Boards who hold steadfastly to the importance of children's work in the library, the rest must follow as the day the night.

It is true that Red Wing's first reading room for the public took little notice of the child's needs; but that it recognized him at all was a first step. The Gay Nineties were not all light-hearted. Books were a serious matter; and one feels that the element of entertainment in reading crept in by an unguarded door. In 1898 the Librarian reports the addition of 181 fiction and juvenile, but 298 books of "the more solid classes." Nevertheless, when the reading room opened its doors in 1894, the accession record shows that the children had such books as *Andersen's Fairy Tales*, *Aesop's Fables*, *What Katy Did*, *Tom Brown's School Days*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and of course *The Five Little Peppers*. Not all children were encouraged to come to the library in those early days. A member of our staff recalls that his father forbade the reading of anything as frothy as the Public Library book collection.

Even for those children whose parents did not frown upon such secular reading, there was still the hazard of the guarantor's card. But on the hopeful side, there were books, there were children, and the library was growing.

By 1900, the idea of a free public library for the city was firmly established. The library had already been moved to larger quarters in another office building. In 1903, thanks to a Carnegie grant and to a land gift from James Lawther of Red Wing, the Carnegie-Lawther Library officially set up housekeeping on its present site.

The children were given the choice alcove with the fireplace. They now had a room of their own, a collection of their own, and a place for story hour. The courage of the early story tellers is no more clearly demonstrated than in the Librarian's report of 1911 which calmly notes that 200 children were in attendance at the Christmas story hour during which a fire blazed cozily on the hearth and the candles burned beautifully on the tree.

By 1916, the old guarantor system was abandoned; the parental signature on the

application was all that a child needed to make the library his; and at last a truly free public library was available to all the children of the community. The Librarian's report at this time says: "A decided increase in juvenile registration is very encouraging. Those who acquire the habit in childhood will in all probability retain it to some extent."

With a growing book collection and the small fry storming the gates, the room on the main floor became inadequate. In 1916, the Sunshine Society having been persuaded to seek other quarters, the children's collection moved book and bookage to the lower floor.

This was not the major catastrophe which it might appear to be. True, we relinquished the fireplace, but long ago it was declared unsafe for further use. First of all, there was elbow room. Then, the quiet which adults prefer could be broken without raised eyebrows from the newspaper section. If we gave up sunlight, we also gave up the solid wall of the adjacent building. The trees from park and boulevard can be seen from the high windows. To the south, the blue sky shows clearly, and from the west windows, the fleeting winter sunsets glow.

With the coming of age of the Children's Room on a floor of its own, a librarian was needed to shepherd it. The quality of the book selection, and the warm welcome which the children found in the room stem from the years of service given by Leila Stickles, a graduate of Western Reserve, who served as Children's Librarian from 1919 to 1945.

Not alone in the children's librarians, but equally in the head librarians, the children of Red Wing were fortunate. For each librarian in turn, with a limited budget at her disposal, recognized the needs of the children and shared accordingly. In April 1921, we find the Librarian reporting to the Board that due to lack of funds no new books at all had been added the previous month; and in August of that year: "One of the most painful features of inadequate library support is that the children's department is most apt to be neglected. The library is an essential part of our educational system. To compel a child to use filthy and ragged books is to lower his consideration for books and libraries."

Long before a children's librarian was added to the staff, the work with children was going forward. As one regards the flexibility of its program and its changing pattern, it is apparent how long and how well the public library has striven to supplement the needs of the child both at home and at school.

Story hours were made possible by women in the community. Particular gratitude goes to Ruth Kellogg, a Red Wing teacher, who was most generous of her time and effort. In 1906, she organized a Library Club whose objectives were "To read good books and to take care of books." In 1909, the club added "Clean hands and consideration for others," an item which parents and grandparents of today might do well to consider; for it reflects their own younger days and suggests the apparent need for such emphasis. Miss Kellogg did much of the story telling; and those of us growing up in Red Wing at the time also recall the story hours by Marion Kassing, the art teacher in the schools. Emily Willard told about birds and their nests and eggs to an eager audience, and Mabelle Miller, in 1911, held ninety-seven children enthralled with an account of Yellowstone Park.

The cordial relationship between school and public library has already been shown in the faculty participation in the library program. As early as 1898, the teachers were granted special privileges. The book collection was so small that only one or two books could be taken at a time; but the teachers were allowed four books for a term of four weeks, a privilege which the faculty is on record as duly appreciating. In 1907, the school children were invited to visit the exhibit of great art housed in the library. The high school students came each year to learn about the arrangement of books so that they could work more effectively. In 1921, the Librarian helped with the cataloging of the High School Library collection. By 1924, a contract between the elementary schools and the Public Library was in effect. The roots of school library service lie in this close cooperation between school and public library, which made available to teachers and students the wider selection of books to supplement the textbook-only type of teaching.

Mrs. Amanda Anderson pioneered in the high school library, working closely with

the Public Library. As the high school collection grew, they leaned less heavily upon the Public Library; but the elementary schools were still serviced by the Children's Room, which housed their collection. It was not until 1949 that the School Board appointed a half time librarian to serve the four elementary schools of the community and the school contract was discontinued.

Having helped to establish the school libraries of Red Wing, the Public Library found a new area of missionary work in the rural schools. They, too, were becoming aware of the need for more adequate library service. Although the staff of the Public Library remained small, they gladly undertook the sharing of their collection with the rural schools. The entire resources of the library were made available to the schools that contracted with the library for service. Busy teachers found time on weekends to come in for boxes of books, enjoying the opportunity to select them from the shelves. Cartons of books were mailed to those farther away. At one time, the library was aiding almost forty rural schools. With the consolidation of the schools, the need for public library service is not so great; but some schools, particularly in the lower grades, have chosen to continue a partial service until their collections are more adequate. Several teachers have personal cards which will help them to select books from a larger collection than their schools can as yet offer.

So the pattern changes. As early as 1920, the Librarian noted the need for a county library serving the whole area. It may be that this will be another step. Many rural patrons have taken out cards so that their children may have the use of books. From that nucleus, the need of expanding library service may grow into a reality.

As to the Children's Room itself, Story Hours, Summer Reading Programs have been continuous. 1952 saw a great change in the appearance of the room, for in that year "Operation Light and Paint" occurred. The once lovely yellow and green which had made the room pleasant had faded. In place of the delicate shades an experiment in color was tried. A deep green blue was used on the shelving; a color strong enough and dark enough to carry the reds, the oranges, the greens and yellows and blues on the books; and a color to make the gay

plastic covered books sparkle. The ceiling and three of the walls were done in a very light, warm gray. The fourth wall picked up the color of the shelving whitened to a robin's egg blue. With the new lights, which make it possible to see into every corner, the room is now altogether cheerful.

With a limited staff, it has been essential to help the children to help themselves as much as possible. To meet this need, fiction was rearranged in broad groupings: *Horse and Dog, Animal, Mystery, Sports, Science Fiction, Older Boys, Teen Age Girls, Family, Short Stories, North America, Around the World*. Because reading ability varies so within a grade, we did not want specific grade levels on the shelves. There are, of course, the *Picture Books*. Then the *Easy to Read* section which includes the primers and easy readers. *Now That You Can Read* has the books from almost third grade through the fourth. For the special interests, we have such groups as *Riddles and Jokes, Indians and Cowboys, and Trains, Trucks*. It has been interesting to watch the children explore the various areas, and to note that books are now going out which formerly were lost to them in the straight alphabetical arrangement.

Because young brothers and sisters cannot be left at home, we plan for them also. Two little school desks hold boxes of crayons — the large size for small hands. Paper is available for drawing (the blank side of discarded mimeographed sheets). We already have a succession of young artists who drop in to do a masterpiece while parents go about the dreary business of adult shopping. Eight Viewmasters and a box of reels bring squeals of joy as favorite scenes are disclosed. A little rocking chair, the childhood treasure of a Red Wing woman, is a delight to boys and girls alike. They rock happily away with Dennis the Menace, Humpty Dumpty, Curious George, or the baby doll. We are convinced that every children's room should own a swivel chair — a merry-go-round chair, we call it. Little brothers and sisters whirl about in it. Older readers settle down for a cozy half hour with a book.

The traditions grow: of course the Christmas tree; more recently the egg tree, which cheers us with its bright eggs and the fragrance of plum blossoms each gray spring. There is the wooden birthday cake which

holds real candles, and the music box to play "Happy Birthday." Little visitors from as far as California remember it when they return to Red Wing each summer. Children bring the younger members of the family to light their birthday candles. There are still story hours. With not an inch of extra room for a story hour place, the Children's Room is closed to circulation of books for a half hour each Saturday morning, the wishing candle is lighted, and story hour is on.

The summer reading program is designed for reluctant readers as well as for the eager ones. Almost four hundred children enrolled last summer to enjoy books with Dennis the Menace. Over eighty of them were second graders; and several teachers report the difference that continued summer reading has made. Sixty came through with fifteen or more visits to the library and many more books read. The prize registrants were two brothers who came forty-six and fifty-nine times to the library and who read well over a hundred books. Their Dennis stands on a stack of books of Jack and Beanpole proportions.

We dream of a beautiful story hour room. We long for a fireplace, for doors and windows opening onto green lawn and snowy shrubs. We look enviously at real charging desks and adjustable shelving; but we know that these are not the essence of library service. An enthusiasm for children and their place in this changing world, the very best books we can buy, the very finest we can share within our limited means — this we can offer. Our cake may not be frosted, but it is full of plums.

### Rochester

LUCILLE GOTTRY

Librarian, Rochester Public Library

With the Rochester Public Library celebrating its sixtieth anniversary as a tax-supported library, this is a good time to take stock of our beginnings in work with children.

In 1865, the first Rochester Library Association was formed. It was a subscription type of library with a small collection, cramped quarters, and insufficient staff. The list of acquisitions shows the regular

addition of a few titles which were "suitable" for young children, and families "joined" the library so that their children might delve into the world of books. For a time it was under the auspices of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, but in 1883 the library association was revitalized and for the first time became known as the Free Library and Reading Room Association. Income for books was secured by giving entertainments, until, in 1886, the Common Council voted an appropriation of \$200 per year for support of the library. In 1891 this sum was increased to the handsome amount of \$300.

Forward-looking citizens were disturbed by the crowded conditions in the library, and one citizen left the sum of \$5,000 in his will for a library building. About this time, 1895, a state law provided for the organization of public libraries, and Burt W. Eaton organized a library association and selected the members of the Board of Directors. The Common Council promptly approved and appointed them, and the formal organization began its existence. The Library was then located in the City Hall, but the books belonged to the old association, so Mr. Eaton succeeded in having the former members transfer the title to the City. This was a major accomplishment in a city of 6,843.

In 1898, the new Board of Directors had brought about the completion of the "Old Library Building" on the corner of First Avenue and Second SW. This red stone building with its tile roof had been built and furnished at a cost of \$15,000. Its excessive cost was due to alteration of the plans to include a Children's Room on the second floor. In the annual report of the first year in the building, the Librarian, Miss Emerick, stated, "Nothing has been harmed in any way. This is remarkably true of the Children's Room which is in more constant use than any in the building. There is not a mark on the walls, no scratch on chairs or tables more than would come from continual use." The juvenile circulation was 6,571 for this year, an increase of 1,464 over the previous year.

The interest of children in use of the library soon brought about story-telling. At first this was done on special occasions, but by 1920 it had become a regular part of the service to children. At first there was no

designation of librarians for the children, as their books were checked out at the central desk. However, as the library staff grew, scheduling of hours and responsibility for work with children was delegated to able staff members. Limited afternoon hours were soon replaced by service that extended into the evenings, a practice which has continued to the present time.

As early as 1905, the Librarian was making contacts with the teachers in the local schools, and a plan that permitted teachers to take out twelve books for class use was devised. In the annual report for that year, the Librarian reported, "The work with the schools has been most pleasant. Most of the teachers are willing to aid us in our efforts to direct the reading of the children into the right channel." This service gradually grew until by 1917 regular trips were made to the schools, where collections of books were housed. No money came from the school to aid this service, nor was the service of a high caliber, but it put books in the hands of the children and acquainted them with libraries.

An inquiry into the budget of this time reveals that the children were included in the selection of magazines: *St. Nicholas*, *Youth's Companion*, *Boy's Life*, and *Little Folks* had become a part of the regular collection. Each month showed considerable use of these periodicals in the recorded circulation. In 1905 the library had been the recipient of a gift of \$20,000, and with the income from the investment they were able to spend more money on books. As a result the children's collection grew in size.

A Children's Librarian, at least one designated for work with children, became a part of the staff about 1920. One young lady, the wife of a Fellow of the Mayo clinic, became the regular "Story Lady" and the whole staff and community felt that a great loss had been suffered when she left the city after several years.

In 1937 the present library building was completed. Because of lack of funds, some of the furniture and fixtures from the old library were moved, so that the work of the library would not be interrupted. It took several years for the Children's Library, with its carving of the Pied Piper over the fireplace, to be completely furnished. The result was worth waiting for — a beautiful room with gay red leather chairs and

benches — a credit to the committee whose dream it was.

Within a few months it was discovered that the former staff could not do all the work in the new building, and it was decided to consult Miss Hutchinson at the Minnesota library school about hiring a children's librarian. The Children's Librarian and her helper had a great deal to do, processing books for both children and adults as well as for the schools. It was their weekly task to go out to the schools, which by now had grown in number to seven, since the population of the city was over 20,000. In addition the Children's Room was kept open from noon until eight-thirty in the evening on week days and from nine until eight-thirty on Saturdays. The collection of children's books had grown to 9,254, there were 2,974 borrowers, and they read a total of 77,724 books. This total included circulation at the schools.

In 1943, a new Children's Librarian came to Rochester. She inherited the duties of her predecessor and reorganized work with children. Among the tasks that Trueda Monson, a Minnesota library school graduate, set for herself were the recataloging of the children's collection, book selection, and the processing of children's books.

The work with schools continued as new schools were added to the city, and an era of work with parents developed. Children from three years of age were welcomed, and, since they could not come alone, parents began to find a new world of literature available to them and their families. Story Hour attendance improved, and puppet plays, and holiday entertainments became a part of the routine.

Work in the library as a whole had grown to such an extent that more people were added to the staff. About this time, the inefficiency of the work with schools became apparent. The library had neither staff nor money for books to keep up with the growing school demands; and the school library movement was being felt in Minnesota as well as other places. Conferences with school authorities resulted in the establishment of a system of elementary school libraries, and the public library furnished help, space, and supplies for the growing system for several years. This was done with the hope that the close contacts between school and children's library could

continue. Regular conferences were instituted for elementary school librarians and children's library staff. These serve as a clearing house for problems and projects. All new teachers in the system, not only teachers in the grades, are guests of the library during their orientation program. Scheduling of classes for the library is done at this time, for, with the growth of the city, distances have increased greatly and it is no longer "a step to the library."

In 1947 a concerted effort was made on the part of the library administration to bring in people who had not been using the services available to them. Book Week provided the springboard for the new plan of public relations, and an Open House became an annual event. Participation of children throughout the city is encouraged on these occasions, special groups in the city assist in bringing the unusual to the library for the children and their parents to enjoy, and classes from the schools are brought in by bus to see the hundreds of new books, the special exhibits, and the conduct of the library. This year the summer reading program was renewed by the new Children's Librarian, and close cooperation with the vacation reading program of parochial schools was carried on.

Growth and development of work with children in Rochester through sixty years has paralleled the growth of the children's library movement in the United States. Where it goes from here is the big question. Changing patterns of living brought about by automobiles, new methods of communication, the new philosophy of education, point up the library's continuing responsibility to the mounting juvenile population. This library's project will be to promote support of these needs in Rochester.

### St. Paul

DELLA McGREGOR

*Chief of Juvenile Division  
St. Paul Public Library*

Since the founding of the St. Paul Public Library there have always been juvenile books in the library collections, although from 1882 to 1889 no separate circulation count was made. The juvenile books and adult fiction were lumped as one class. By

1889, when the library moved into quarters in the City Hall, then on Fourth and Wabasha, the count was kept separately, and it was found that juvenile circulation amounted to 26.32 per cent of the total. In 1897, first one and later a second room were set aside in the City Hall for the children, which adds force to the statement made the previous year in the annual report that "the adult delivery has been so crowded for the last few months by the children as to obstruct the passageway to the reference room and other parts of the library."

By 1898, the rooms allotted to the juvenile patrons were needed for expanding adult activities. It seemed likely that space for the Children's Room books would have to be found outside the building. When Mayor Kiefer heard of it, he insisted on moving out of his private office. The Mayor's generous gesture solved the problem temporarily.

As time went on, work with children became acceptable as one of the important functions of the library. When the library outgrew the City Hall space and moved to the Market Street building on the corner of Seventh and Wabasha, the largest and sunniest corner room was saved for the Juvenile Division.

Elizabeth Dennis, a former kindergarten teacher, became Superintendent of Library Service to Children, a position that entailed supervision of the Children's Room; classroom library service to elementary schools; and a teacher's corner housing storytelling source books, song and folk dance collections, a picture collection, and a teachers' professional library.

In this spacious environment the work continued to expand from 1900 to April 15, 1915, the night of the fire, when every book and piece of furniture went up in smoke, including a complete set of *Youth's Companion*, dating back to 1801. The only juvenile books that survived the fire were those out in circulation. Two days later, temporary quarters for the entire library were found in the old House of Hope Church. The Sunday School Room was speedily transformed into a children's room, much to the surprise and inconvenience of the mice, who had also moved into temporary lodgings in the empty church. As books out in circulation were returned, they became the nucleus of the juvenile collec-

tion, for which new titles were to be purchased and catalogued.

By November of 1916, the construction of the present Central Library was far enough along to permit the children's collection of around 2,500 titles to be moved over, with the able assistance of thirty-five Boy Scouts. It was not until 1917, however, that their beautiful new room, with its soft French gray woodwork and gaily enameled lighting fixtures, was ready for them. In the new quarters, the Children's Department lived, flourished, and expanded for over thirty years.

Book-promotion features for the children included puppet plays, storytelling, class visits, and nature contests. Newspapers gave generous space to publicity; juvenile card holders increased to fifty-seven per cent of the school population; and branch libraries with children's rooms were added to provide for an increasingly interested and library-minded clientele.

By 1938, the Main Children's Room was again bursting at the seams. In order to give better service to teen-agers, it was decided that the story hour room might well be sacrificed to provide them with specialized service in a room of their own. Mr. William Skinner provided the funds for the renovation and furniture and a generous allotment was made for a teen-age book collection.

The room was designed by Magnus Jemne and opened to the public in June, 1939. The room was called the James H. Skinner Room in memory of Mr. William Skinner's father. From the beginning the book collection, though small, has been a balanced one, with a slight emphasis on contemporary titles, since duplicate copies of older titles are available in other departments. All fields of knowledge are included.

The object of the service to teen-agers is to encourage diversified reading and to awaken new interests in the individual. Because no one knows when a given person is ready for a certain book, no special cards are issued for the privilege of using the room. The Skinner Room approximates in comfort and informality the library in a modern home. The relationship of librarian to patron more nearly resembles that of hostess and guest. Along with the beauty and comfort of the room, the newness of the books and the feeling of informality have

pleased the young people tremendously. The architectural features and objectives of the room are described in the September, 1940, issue of *Minnesota Libraries* and in *Publishers Weekly* for November 11, 1939.

By 1948 the Children's Room was again on the move, though temporarily this time. In April all but 1,700 volumes were packed for storage, and staff and patrons, like Alice in Wonderland, telescoped themselves into a disused checkroom off the main lobby. The Children's Room was to be remodeled. In May, 1949, with the remodeling completed, the reopening was celebrated with a week-long series of festivities.

The new surroundings were made possible by Mrs. Arthur H. Savage's generous gift in memory of her parents, Thomas and Emily Belden Cochran. Both the furniture and the wall paneling were built from seventeen century-old native Minnesota walnut trees planted by Minnesota pioneers in Blue Earth County. Magnus Jemne, the architect, designed the room and the furniture.

The room is both functional and beautiful. In the planning stage, the donor, architect, and library staff recognized the necessity of having a free, happy place in which all the children of the city might find for themselves new adventures, new companions, new experiences, and endless information from the printed page. Ever since the day in 1898 when Mayor Kiefer gave up his private office so that library service to children could function as an integral part of all library service to the community, that idea has been growing. Just as the grace and beauty of the physical room got much of its inspiration from the idea behind it, so also the spirit of the children who enter its doors has been and will continue to be touched and quickened by both the physical beauty of the surroundings and the diversified character of the book collection it houses. A detailed description of the special features of the room appeared in *Minnesota Libraries* for September, 1949.

From the days in 1882 when books for children were lumped together with adult fiction, there have been tremendous changes in both the character of the book collection and the patterns of service. In addition to the Children's and Skinner Rooms, School Division, and Classroom Library Division at the Main Library, children are now

offered service through branches, stations, a bookmobile, and a Hospital Library Division.

A progressive program of activities for future growth is in the making, although the shortage of trained personnel is a matter of grave concern. Library service to children continues to offer a challenge to individuals interested in making books a meaningful part of children's growth and education.

### Stillwater

GERTRUDE GLENNON

*Librarian, Stillwater Public Library*

On August 15, 1900, at a Library Board meeting, the following motion was passed: "Children between the ages of 9 and 14 are allowed books between hours of one and six." On November 12, 1901, an appropriation of ten dollars was made for children's books.

On a bright October day in the late 1930's, chairs, tables, desks, and catalog cases were moved to a new Children's Room on the lower floor of the library. This was a great day — now the children had their own room in the Public Library.

Many welcome gifts have found their way to this department: the Stillwater Shrine Club gave money and bookplates; friends gave books and money for books or whatever was needed; an architect from the East who spent some time in the library gave some money at Christmas time to decorate the Children's Room; a display case was given in memory of one of the Library Trustees.

Several authors, artists, musicians, and photographers have shown an interest in the Children's Room. Mrs. Mildred Comfort, author of the *Johnny Smoker* stories, has often visited with the Stillwater children during Book Week celebrations. Marguerite Murphy, another Minnesota author of juvenile stories and plays, frequents our Children's Department. Elizabeth Palmer, author of *Nightingale House*, lent the original doll house that she describes in her book. Another doll house exhibited in the Children's Room was made by an entire family of seven; the mother is an artist. Other local hobbies and crafts have played

a part in the exhibits. The Art Supervisor of the Stillwater area has arranged several displays of original art work done by her pupils. Puppet shows have been presented for the children by a member of the library staff. At one time the Children's Department had a small reading club, which was sponsored by a reading teacher.

During Book Week we had parades, with children dressed as book characters. The Stillwater Band and a child dressed as Joan of Arc led the procession through the business district. Also in observance of Book Week we have had book plays, and even an original play put on by some of the children. Our first Book Week display was in 1919, and we have had one every year since. For several years we borrowed books from publishers and had a representative from the local book shop to take orders. This was then the only opportunity that people in Stillwater had to become acquainted with children's books, but because of lack of space these displays were discontinued.

The present Children's Department has a well-chosen collection of books, magazines, pictures, puzzles, and phonograph records. It is open from 10:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. every day except Sunday. It has a bulletin board, and a child's rocking chair that is enjoyed by all the little children — sometimes even a Daddy tries it! We now have a full-time, trained teacher-librarian, who knows children and children's books, and how to bring them together. Today these are necessities, but for us there has been a long, hard struggle to gain them.

Before the days of radio and television, story hours were real occasions. We averaged an attendance of seventy-five children from all over town. The Story Hour was in the charge of Mrs. John Stuhr, who was assisted by members of the Friends of the Library group. Now we have a Children's Hour each Saturday morning for children between the ages of five and eight. Stories, which are told by the Children's Librarian, are sometimes acted out by the children. Occasionally we have folk dancing and singing. The group is growing, and we are again beginning to have a space problem.

Our aim has always been and will continue to be the stimulation of the child's reading interest, working in cooperation with the home and the school.

## Winona

DOROTHY JEFFERSON

*Children's Librarian  
Winona Public Library*

"Is it really magic?" asked a believing little girl on looking at the golden magic wand in the display case.

Ever since its opening the Children's Room of the Winona Public Library has been a truly "magic" place for the children of Winona, who are not only allowed the privilege of using the room but are pursued by many an ingenious web of strategy to lure them to the treasures it opens to them.

The Children's Room was opened for use in December, 1921, after a long period of working and striving to provide a separate area for juvenile books. A large semi-basement room with a separate entrance was planned and furnished with oak tables and chairs and shelving to accommodate some 5,000 books, which number the Children's Room had at the time of opening.

From the beginning Winona has been fortunate in having had professionally trained children's librarians who have loved books and children and who have maintained a high standard of book selection and activity. The first Children's Librarian was Mary Holmes, a graduate of the Winona Teachers' College and of the 1921 class of the University of Wisconsin Library Division. In March, 1922, after her special visits to the city schools to tell the children about the library, the newspaper reports, "Many little boys and girls were seen tramping through the streets or boarding the street cars en route for the public library." About 75 children attended the story hour that Saturday, listening to stories of the knight, Saint George, "The Discontented Pig," and beginning installments of stories about Ulysses and King Arthur. The Room was open at that time from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M., and 7 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. except on Saturdays and holidays, when the hours were 10 A.M. to 12 M., and 1 P.M. to 6 P.M.

The second librarian was Florence Butler, now head of children's library work in Sioux City, Iowa, and nationally known for her vigorous public relations program. She further expanded good community re-

lations and did much outside-the-library-walls to make the children aware of the library's services.

Gertrude Schepers, Ardis Huls, and Marion Schroether, though they remained in Winona only a few years, maintained a high standard of service to children. Miss Schroether is now head of work with children in Waukegan, Illinois.

Mrs. Averil Randall, now director of work with children in Memphis, Tennessee, served here just six months, but she added her wisdom and inspiration to the policies and progress of the Children's Room.

Irene Garrigan, three years a member of the public library staff and now head of school library services in Winona, was concerned with the junior high school teen-age readers. They seemed to be a lost group, feeling too old for the shelves of books in the Children's Room but quite bewildered by the shelves of adult books. In June, 1945, a new section was installed in the north end of the Children's Room, and a

stock of books compatible to their interests and abilities was provided for them.

The present librarian, Dorothy Jefferson, has been the Children's Librarian for six years. Her major fields of service are encouraging the use of the library through school publicity and visits; frequent talks to classes of the Winona State Teachers' College and inviting their visits to the library. Each year a great deal of time and effort is spent on a really stimulating November Book Week celebration and a colorful summer reading program designed to captivate and maintain the children's interest through the warmer months. This year 309 children joined the vacation reading club. In June 9,235 books were circulated, the highest number in the history of the Children's Room.

Our children's librarians have long waved the golden magic wand in Winona. They have all concentrated on a creative reading program to light that most vital spark in the development of the child's world, the magic joy of books.

### *A Note From Russell Schunk*

I wish to extend my best wishes to the librarians, trustees and Friends of Libraries with whom it has been my privilege to work over the past ten years. I have great respect and deep appreciation for their untiring efforts to better library conditions. Mrs. Schunk and I have received many evidences of your kindness and thoughtfulness. We will always cherish them and will follow with great interest Minnesota's library developments from our home in Orlando, Florida.

Sincerely,

Russell J. Schunk

# School Librarians' Workshop

NAOMI HOKANSON

President, Minnesota Association of School Librarians

Madden's Lodge was again the setting for the fourth biennial workshop of the Minnesota Association of School Librarians, September 16-18, which was attended by one hundred and forty school librarians from all over the state.

The first session on Friday afternoon was a general meeting in which Ingrid Miller, Jane Strebler, and Katherine Blackwell did an able job of introducing the conference theme, "The School Library and Problems of Evaluation," by indicating the purposes of evaluation, the methods to be used, and the results to be obtained. With these objectives clearly in view, the workshop members were then divided into five groups, determined by the size or type of schools in which they worked, to concentrate on the major areas of the subject. Continuity throughout was assured, as all groups used the same basic outline, *A Planning Guide for the High School Library Program*, by Frances Henne, Ruth Ersted, and Alice Lohrer.

The five study groups, with different leaders for each group, and each subject area, met on Friday evening, Saturday morning, and for a brief time on Saturday afternoon. The following areas of evaluation were developed: Library Services to Students and Teachers; Budget, Quarters, and Equipment; General Use of the Library; and the Materials Collections.

Saturday evening a general meeting was held in which Janet Newcomb, James Gregg, Ruth Mitchell, and Elizabeth Schultz reported the findings and recommendations of the individual group meetings. Ruth Ersted encouraged and chal-

lenged MASL members when she spoke to them on the topic, "Better School Libraries for Minnesota."

Saturday afternoon was used for recreation. MASL members played golf, went swimming in the heated pool, visited Lumber Town, had a boat tour on Gull Lake, and enjoyed walking in the wooded area surrounding the lodge.

There were several attractive displays of library materials in the main lodge, the opera house, and in those cabins where meetings were held. The following librarians prepared bibliographies relating to these displays and presented them on Sunday morning at a general meeting in the opera house: Ruth E. Johnson, "You and Your Personality"; Ruth Fenner, "Books for Reading Aloud"; Margaret Costello, "Recreational Reading for Slow Learning Children"; and Carol Eastvold, "India." There was also an exhibit and a presentation of audio-visual materials by Synova Anderson, Almyra Baker, and Emma Storsteen. The conference closed with a summary report by Marion Gratz, Myrtle Hoverson, and Evelyn Sutles.

Fifty-two MASL members took an active part in the program. Three committees were responsible for the workshop. Willa Church, program chairman, was assisted by Paul Berrisford, Jean Macrae, and Lorraine Prestemon. Arrangements committee chairman was Lois White, assisted by Margaret Rasmussen and Lorraine Vetter. Ingrid Miller was in charge of entertainment.

Jane Carstens of Lafayette, Louisiana, who is a Library Science Instructor at the University of Minnesota this year, was a guest at the workshop.

## Library Science Courses

David Berninghausen, Director of the Library School of the University of Minnesota, announces that three courses required for certification as a school librarian will be offered this winter quarter.

L. S. 172, Reading Guidance for Adolescents, 3 credits, will be offered Monday and Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:00 P.M. This course can also be counted as graduate credit for students who already have a bachelor's degree.

L. S. 53, School Library Management, 3 credits, will be offered at 3:30-5:00 P.M., Monday and Thursday afternoons.

L. S. 74, Library Materials in the Classroom, 2 credits, will be offered at 2:30-3:30 P.M., Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

# Minnesota Library Association Conference, 1955

DAVID R. WATKINS

*Past President, Minnesota Library Association*

The Sixtieth Conference of the Minnesota Library Association, which coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of the Rochester Public Library, met in Rochester at the Hotel Kahler on September 29, 30, and October 1. Lucille Gottry, Rochester City Librarian, was conference chairman, and Erana Stadler, Librarian of the Owatonna Free Public Library, was chairman of the program committee.

The general sessions, of which there were five, were presented by sections of MLA, a device which was new to the organization and which was received enthusiastically by the membership. The First General Session, however, was reserved for major items of Association business: the report of the Intellectual Freedom Committee and a consideration of the problem created by the reduction in status of the State Library Division in the Department of Education. Perrie Jones, acting chairman of the Intellectual Freedom Committee, presented in summary the report of James H. Richards, Jr., the former chairman, and an outline of activities of the Committee subsequent to his resignation. Miss Jones introduced Mr. McClure of the University Law School faculty, who described the bill for the control of obscene literature which he had written and which had been introduced in the last session of the Legislature. Mr. McClure stressed the fact that there is a practical problem before us: there will be some sort of obscene literature legislation passed because of the temper of the public mind at the moment, and the job for us to do is to present a good, workable bill which will safeguard freedom of reading and expression. At the final business session of the conference the Association went on record as unanimously supporting Mr. McClure's bill.

The second item of business, dealing with the status of the Library Division, was discussed by the President with the assistance of Glenn Lewis and Mrs. J. R. Sweasy. Mrs. Henry Kramer, a new member of the Board of Education, substituted for Mr. Schweickhard and presented some thoughts about the

situation and asked some questions of the other members of the panel.

A very well-attended Trustees luncheon followed the morning session. The Second General session convened at 2:00 P.M., sponsored by the Trustees and Small Public Library Sections, with Mr. Schunk presiding. The speaker was Richard W. Poston, Director of the Department of Community Development of the Southern Illinois University. Mr. Poston's speech was followed by a panel discussion in which Mr. Berninghausen acted as moderator with Mr. Poston, C. C. McQuillan, Mayor of Rochester, A. W. Hartl, Trustee of Fergus Falls, Mrs. George A. Kakela, Librarian of Mountain Iron, and Marie Knudson, Librarian of International Falls, as members of the panel.

The Third General Session, which convened in the evening, was sponsored by the Children's Section with Ethel Olson of the Minneapolis Public Library presiding. Dean Huntley Dupre of Macalester College substituted for the scheduled speaker, Philip D. Jordan, speaking on the subject, "When the Big Music Came."

The Fourth General Session on Friday morning was jointly sponsored by the College and Reference Sections with Martina Brown presiding over a panel which discussed the use of audio-visual materials. A tour of the Mayo Clinic was made at 2:00 o'clock, and a tea at the Rochester Public Library, sponsored by the Rochester Library Board and the Friends of the Library, followed. The banquet in the evening was presided over by Mrs. J. R. Sweasy, president-elect of the Association.

The final General Session was sponsored by the County Library Section, and was preceded by a business meeting at which the president presided. One of the acts of this session was the passing of a resolution urging the State Department of Education to restore the Library Division to full status in the Department of Education and to grant the State Director of Libraries equal status with the other heads of divisions in the Department. The address of the morning was

delivered by Ruth Warncke, Director of the Library-Community Project of the American Library Association. The sectional luncheons and business meetings followed.

The registration at the meeting was somewhat over 250. Everyone seemed pleased

with the efficient service which the Hotel Kahler staff gave the conference. Of particular note was the spacious exhibit hall on the mezzanine floor of the hotel. The 1956 meeting of the Association will take place in Minneapolis.

### *Study Course for Trustees*

An unusual opportunity for public library trustees to learn more about their responsibilities and functions is made possible for the first time by a practical home study course co-sponsored by the American Library Association and the University of Chicago.

The American Association of Library Trustees, a section of the ALA Public Libraries Division, is promoting the course, "How to Be a Good Library Board Member," among its members and also urging librarians to bring the opportunity to the attention of library board members throughout the country.

The AALT President, Frank T. Milligan, of Jefferson, Iowa, in a communication to presidents of state library trustees organizations, said:

"... the greater responsibility for improving library trusteeship lies with us, the trustees. I hope you will use every means you have to spread the news of this opportunity to improve our work as library board members. Of the approximately 6,000 library boards in the United States, at least 1,000 should be studying together this winter, and at least 500 individuals should enroll for this course."

The course was prepared by Helen A. Ridgway, who, as Course Adviser, enters into "conversation-by-mail" with those who enroll. Miss Ridgway, formerly ALA Public Library Specialist, is presently Chief, Bureau of Library Services, Connecticut State Department of Education.

Full information on the course may be obtained from Miss S. Janice Kee, Executive Secretary of the ALA Public Libraries Division, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago 11, Illinois.

On July 7, 1955, at the Philadelphia ALA Conference, the Trustees Section of ALA Conference changed its name to: The American Association of Library Trustees.

The purposes of the new organization are:

1. To study and encourage the development of libraries and library service in the United States and Canada.
2. To study the library programs of the several states and Canada and to disseminate the information gained from such study; and to strengthen state trustee organizations.

## SALMAGUNDI

### White House Conference

Libraries of Minnesota were well represented at the White House Conference on Education. Mrs. Oscar E. Hedin, member of the State Board of Education, was a delegate from the Seventh Congressional District.

Mrs. Evelyn Malone, President of the Board of Trustees of the Windom Public Library was selected as one of the two delegates from the Second Congressional District.

Wayne R. Bassett of Worthington, Librarian of the Nobles County Library and member of the Minnesota Legislature from the Eleventh District, was also a delegate from Minnesota at the White House Conference, November 28-December 1.

### Farewell Dinner

Librarians of Minnesota honored Mr. and Mrs. Russell J. Schunk at a farewell dinner at Coffman Memorial Union, University of Minnesota, on November 4. The dinner was attended by seventy-five librarians from metropolitan, small public, school, university and special libraries throughout Minnesota.

The toastmistress, Mrs. Helen Sweasy, President of the Minnesota Library Association, and other speakers gave tributes from small and large public libraries, county libraries, school libraries, the staff of the Library Division, and the trustees of Minnesota libraries.

Mr. Schunk, Director of the Library Division from 1948 to 1955, resigned effective November 1, to open a library consultant service for southern states, with headquarters in Orlando, Florida.

Mrs. Schunk left Walker Branch of the Minneapolis Public Library to become Head of the Children's Department of the Albertson Public Library in Orlando.

The dinner was arranged by a committee of which David R. Watkins, immediate past president of the Minnesota Library Association, was chairman.

### Erna F. Holzinger

Librarians of the state will miss Erna Holzinger, librarian of the New Ulm Public Library, who became ill while at work

in the library on October 12 and died the next morning.

Miss Holzinger had been in charge of the library since it was opened in 1937. Previous to that time she had served as librarian of the New Ulm High School Library.

Her interest and devotion to library service lasted through the years. They were reflected in Miss Holzinger's enthusiastic announcement at the M. L. A. Conference at Rochester a few days before her death. New Ulm authorities had purchased additional property and the children's room she had hoped for was materializing.

### Personal

Mrs. Clifford Fering, who has been assistant librarian since 1953, was appointed acting librarian of the New Ulm Public Library in October.

Mrs. Lucy Olson, Librarian of the Windom Public Library, retired effective October 1. She had served the community for nearly a quarter of a century during the development from a small club collection to a well-established public library.

Mrs. Robert Remick has become acting librarian of the Windom Public Library.

Eileen Quanbeck, a graduate of Augsburg College and University of Minnesota, is a new children's librarian at East Lake Branch, Minneapolis.

After two years of service as county children's librarian of the Nobles County Library at Worthington, Mary Owen has begun work as children's librarian at Roosevelt Branch, Minneapolis.

The Minneapolis Public Library staff serving in Minneapolis school libraries includes three newcomers to the system, Catherine Tice at Fuller, Mary Doyle at Corcoran, and Mrs. Janice Hesdorfer at Howe and Windom schools.

Mrs. Clovis Smidt succeeded Mrs. Teresa McNeal as librarian of the Stewartville Public Library in October.

Mrs. Chester Jacobson, a former teacher, is the new librarian of the Clay County Library service following the resignation of Joan Hoffman in July.

### Fiftieth Anniversary

Fifty years of cultural service to the residents of Virginia and service since 1937 to

rural residents of the part of St. Louis County that is adjacent to the city were recognized October 29, at a golden anniversary testimonial.

Taking part in the event, at which Dorothy Karon, President of the Library Board, presided as toastmistress, were county and city officials, library board members of past and present days, school officials, and librarians and trustees from Northeastern Minnesota.

Speeches were made by Harold Hedman, Chisholm, Past President of the Range Library Trustees Association, and Ethel Binney, Head of the Virginia Public Library.

Among the 144 in attendance were 34 out-of-town trustees, 10 out-of-town librarians and eight local trustees.

#### Countryman Memorial

A memorial to Miss Gratia Countryman, Librarian of the Minneapolis Public Library from 1904 to 1936 and first initiate of the Delta Gamma sorority at the University of Minnesota, has been planned by alumnae of the local Delta Gamma chapter.

Funds obtained are being used to purchase fifteen framed prints and six small metal replicas of prehistoric animals to be given to the Department of Work with Children of the library. The collection will be loaned to children's rooms throughout the library system.

The committee making the choices includes Mrs. Woodbury Andrews, representative of the alumnae; and three library staff members—Mrs. Phyllis Bryan, coordinator of work with children; Miss Ruth Jermann, head of the Art Department; and Miss Betty Welles, children's librarian at the Hosmer Branch. Miss Welles is also an alumna of Delta Gamma.

Selections include among others a pair of pictures by Albrecht Dürer, the "Hare" and the "Squirrel"; two Mexican prints entitled "Market Day in Patzcuaro" and "Shopping at Mercado," both by Vance; "Dancer in White" by Louis Kronberg; a Swiss print by Anker called "Chicken Yard"; "Minnesota" by Dehn; and Stanley M. Long's "Shady Pool." The replicas, which measure two to four inches in height, are of such animals as the *Dinetrodon*, *Trachodon*, *Stegosaurus*, *Brontosaurus*, *Tyrannosaurus*, and *Triceratops*.

Credited by many with having the first children's room in the country, the Minne-

apolis Public Library, under the guidance of Miss Countryman, was the first to appoint a librarian for children's work exclusively.

Miss Countryman died in 1953 at the age of 87.

#### Franklin Anniversary

Libraries of the United States will cooperate in the international celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, January 17, 1956. A number of informative pamphlets on Franklin and the celebration are available from: *250th Anniversary Committee, The Franklin Institute, 20th and Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania*.

#### Area Round Table

Library administrators of the Twin Cities area of Minnesota and Wisconsin responded to the invitation of Frederick Wezeman of the University of Minnesota Library School faculty, to meet on October 25 at Coffman Memorial Student Union.

The group plans to meet at three-month intervals for lunch and two hours' discussion of problems common to the public libraries of the area, regardless of their size.

That the plan is highly acceptable to the librarians of the region was indicated by the presence, at the first meeting, of librarians from points as far from the Twin Cities as Hutchinson, Winona, Martin County, and Eau Claire.

With Mr. Wezeman serving as moderator, the librarians discussed such topics as increasing the book budget, discounts, building needs, and plasti-clears.

#### Anoka Record Library

The Anoka Public Library recently added the lending of musical records to its services.

The Philolectian Society of Anoka donated funds for the first purchases, high fidelity long-playing recordings of great works of music, grand opera, light opera, and concertos.

#### Arrowhead Meeting

The fall meeting of the Arrowhead Library Association was held October 19 at the Eveleth Public Library.

The group discussed the Library Services Bill, a proposed library television program, possibility of a film circuit for Minnesota, and training of non-professional staff members.

## *School Library Bill of Rights*

School libraries are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms and with the preservation of these freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. To this end the American Association of School Librarians reaffirms the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association and asserts that the responsibility of the school library is:

- To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served
- To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards
- To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily life
- To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking
- To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage
- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library

*Unanimous adoption of the School Library Bill of Rights was voted at the closing session of the ALA Council, July 8, 1955.*